

The Low-country Soldier turned Burgomaster



PART. I.

HERE you may see the turns of fate,
From woe to joy, from poor to great,
A mark of fortune's special love,
Who did a Soldier's grief remove.

One in former days 'tis told,
Had trug'd thro' weather hot and cold;
'Till he was poor and pennyless,
You would have laugh'd to see his drefs.

His shoes with trudging up and down
No foal they had, a hat no crown,
His coat no sleeves, his shirt the fame,
But by his side a sword of fame.

Without a scabbard good or bad,
Nor was there any to be had;
His coat and breeches would not come
In depth to cover half his bum.

Now being weary of his trade,
One day he to his captain said,
Pray now give me a full discharge,
That I my fortune may enlarge.

I am persuaded I shall be a
Burgomaster, sir, said he,
To Venice, if you'll let me go,
His captain smiling answered, No.

With you he said, I will not part,
Then thought the soldier, 'I'll desert
My colours, let what will befall;
And soon he went for good and all.

Now as he march'd with all his might,
A coachman and his worthy knight,
Upon the road he chanc'd to find,
And ask'd to borrow full five pound.

At this the knight laugh'd out again,
And said, when will you pay it again,
He answer'd, sir, you shall be paid,
When I am Burgomaster made.

Of Venice, which will be my lot,
The noble knight away he got,
And laugh'd to see him in that trim,
But still the coachman lent it him.

This being done, away he went
To Venice, where some time he spent,
To view the Palace rich and gay,
And then to a burgo's took his way.

Who kept a house to entertain
All kind of guest. He call'd amain
For wine and oter liquors free,
Tho' in a wretched garb was he.

PART II.

THIS foldier was a gallant blade,
And while in pleasure then he stay'd,
Behold a 'quire living near,
Court'd the Burgo's daughter dear.

Now as he kept her company,
One day the soldier sitting by,
Feigning asleep he overheard
This private talk as it appear'd.

Part of the private talk was this,
My dear sweet love, the charming bliss,
Let me enjoy this self same night,
The damfel told him that he might.

If he would to the chamber creep,
When all the house was fast asleep,
About the hour of twelve o'clock,
She would the door for him unlock.

The folder heard the whole design,
Thought he, the pleasure shall mine,
And thereupon he went before,
To the young lad's chamber door.

He knock'd, and soon we let him in,
A pleasant Game did then begin,
And e'er an hour's time was past,
Her love the 'quire came at last.

He knock'd who's there the lady cry'd,
The soldier lying by her side,
Seid he, It is the ragged fellow sure,
As seem'd as if he slept secure.

He heard us and is come to have,
That pleasure which our love did crave,
But it's in vain, I will arise,
And dash the piss-pot in his eyes.

Accordingly in woful case,
He dash'd it in the 'quire's face:
Away he goes, but nothing said,
Supposing it had been the maid.

She laugh'd at the pleasant jest,
And gave him then amongst the rest,
A diamond ring, with kisses sweet,
But did not understand the cheat.

Then he arose and went his way,
Behold on the succeeding day,
Upon his right hand there the espy'd,
Pray where had you the fame the cry'd.

He answer'd then, and thus he said,
Pray be not in the least dismay'd;
For you was loving, kind and free
Last night, and gave the fame to me.

O blest me! did I lie with you?
Since it is so, I pray be true;
And do not let the fame be told,
So thou shalt never want for gold.

He vow'd he would conceal the fame,
Soon after this the 'quire came,
Saying, why was you so unkind,
The piss-pot made me almost blind.

The youthful damfel, answer'd thus,
'Tis good enough if it were worse;
Because you thought to ruin me,
My honour and my chastity.

PART III.

IN part the third we must return,
Unto a mighty great concern,
Consisting of some thousand pounds,
Which the poor soldier's fortune crown.

Behold her wealthy father he,
Did send four mighty ships to sea,
Laden with glorious merchandize,
Rich silks and other wares likewise.

They had been gone full seven years,
No tale or tydings they could hear,
So that at length he gave them o'er,
And never thought to see them more.

At length there was a letter brought,
The ships were safe with riches frought,
Near to the borders of the land,
Which news came to his daughters hand.

Then having view'd and read the fame,
She to the ragged soldier came,
Crying, my dear, be true to me,
You shall a Burgomaster be.

My father thinks his ships are lost,
Which now are on the Venice coast;
And e'er he does the tydings hear,
Go try his right in them my dear.

And when thou hast the bargain bought,
Of four large ships richly fraught,
Be what it will, of me you shall
Have money, for to pay for all.

Then on her father he did wait,
And struck a bargain with him straight;
For the four ships four hundred pound,
Whether the fame be left or found.

No sooner was the bargain made,
And that small sum of money paid,
But he heard the ships were come,
Their Burden was a mighty sum.

Then did the Burgomaster fret,
'Cause he with such a loss had met;
But since it could no better be,
He with the soldier did agree.

To take his daughter for a bride,
With all his heart he then reply'd;
Then out of hand they married were,
The soldier and the lady fair.

No sooner they were man and wife,
But soon her father left this life,
And when he in his grave was laid,
The son was Burgomaster made.

He that had travel'd many miles,
Was now by fortune's special smiles,
Made mighty, powerful and great,
And knew no end of his estate.

PART IV.

NOW mind the latter part I pray,
I make no question but you'll say,
Still as you read the story out,
The things were strangely brought about.

While he was Burgomaster we hear,
His former captain did repair
Unto his house, by chance to dine,
With other brave commanders fine.

The Burgomaster seeing that,
He straight put on his no crown hat,
With all his ragged worn out cloaths,
And so into the room he goes.

The captain then begun to swear,
Lieutenant, pray see who is there,
My ragged Burgomaster, who
In private from his colours drew.

Straight from the presence of his guest,
He step'd away, himself he drest

In sumptuous robes he drest amain,
And then return'd to them again.

The captain said, right worthy sir,
Here is a foolish ragged cur,
Fndu'd with neither wit nor sense,
I'll hang him e'er I go from hence.

He from his colours did desert,
The Burgo said, be not so tart,
In presence of these gentlemen,
Write his discharge here's guineas ten.

He wrote the fame, and took the gold,
The Burgomaster said, behold,
I am the man, and now at last,
What once I said, is come to pass.

The captain then began to fume,
And told the gallants in the room,
If he had known as much before,
It should have cost him ten times more.

And then within a month or less,
The knight whom once he did address,
To lend him five pounds on the road,
Came here to take up his abode.

The Burgomaster as before,
Put on his robes both rent and tore,
So that the knight might know him strait,
As he did on his worship wait.

He to his coachman turn'd him round,
And said there's one owes you five pounds,
When do you think the fame to get,
He is not Burgomaster yet.

The coachman said, as I do live,
I freely do the fame forgive,
Because I to my sorrow see,
He still remains in poverty.

For some short time he went away,
And drest himself in rich array;
In feathers fine and rich perfume,
And so return'd into the room.

Having discours'd with them awhile,
He told the coachman with a smile,
As he help'd him in time of need,
He would return it now indeed.

He gave him then five hundred Pound,
Likewise a match for him he found,
A sweet young Lady fair and clear,
Daughter to a renowned peer.

The knight was vexed to the heart,
That he must with his servant part,
But let him grieve it must be so,
Whether his lordship will or know.

Thus he who once was mean and poor,
At length enjoys a happy store,
Which fortune unto him did send,
And he proved grateful to his friend.